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PLATO AND THE MORAL STANDARD (II).

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SO far we have examined Plato's position with reference to the following norms or standards to which actual reference is made in the Dialogues: (1) Universal assent, (2) The writings of the legislator, (3) Quantity of pleasure, (4) *Æsthetic* quality, (5) Expediency or benefit, especially to individuals, (6) Contribution towards the life of the social whole, (7) Orderliness, and (8) Adequacy and self-sufficiency. It remains to examine in the same way (9) Consistency and (10) Objectivity, before we shall be in a position to come to a final conclusion as to Plato's main standpoint *re* the moral standard.

9. CONSISTENCY.

Consistency is, in the first place, understood by Plato in a logical sense, as a standard of scientific method, or a principle governing the research of philosophical interlocutors, as they experiment in common and observe the logical sequences of an argument, following it whithersoever it may lead (*Theæt.* 154 D f., *Soph.* 230 B f.). If the various consequences of a given position contradict one another, that is a sure sign that there is some logical flaw in the position itself, and that the position in question must, by all who accept the standards involved in the dialectical method, be abandoned (*Gorg.* 460 E f., 509 A, etc.). If, on the other hand, all the logical consequences of a given position meet in a single point, or tend in one and the same direction, *i.e.*, are harmonious and consistent, they not only confirm one another, but strengthen and indeed in the end prove the truth of the position under discussion (*Rep.* 498 E). The ideal of method is thus that scientific thinking should exhibit the characteristics of identity of direction, concentration of evidence upon a single point, harmony and systematic unity (*Polit.* 285 B f., *Soph.* 253 B f.).

The reason for accepting consistency as a standard for methodical or scientific thinking, is that consistency is a fundamental characteristic of the object of such thinking. The aim of scientific or methodical thinking is to discover a law, to disentangle the Idea from its sensory envelope, its "appearances," and study it by the clear light of intellect, not only in its own nature, but also in its relations to other Ideas (Soph. 259 E, Phileb. 16 D-E, etc.). Thus discovered, the Idea is found to be a "one in many," *i.e.*, to exhibit the characteristic of identity in diversity, or of consistency and systematic unity, and in their relations to one another the Ideas as a whole constitute precisely such a system (Phædr. 249 B, Soph. 254 B f.). Each Idea is different from each other Idea, but the ideal realm as a whole exhibits in the clearest possible way the attributes of unity in diversity, consistency, systematic harmony (Soph. 250 ff.). The object of thought thus possesses the characteristic of consistency in the highest degree, and can be approached cognitively only by a method which is capable of taking on this characteristic. Man possesses innately a certain kinship with reality. He has an *Anlage* in his mind which is identical in principle with the most fundamental law of objects. The problem is, so to develop this *Anlage* that the mind can fully apprehend its natural objects (Theæt. 185 D f., Rep. 490 B-C, etc.). Not every activity of mind will do. *E.g.*, sense-perception, which many regard as the proper instrument of knowledge, is hopelessly inadequate. Fluidity, instability, impermanence—its prevailing characteristics—are as such incapable of taking on fixity and permanence. Sensory experience and the world of ideal relationships are thus disparate, and no amount of using our eyes and ears alone will ever give us scientific knowledge (Theæt. 157, Rep. 529 B f.). So again of emotional and artistic experience, commonly regarded as the pathway to Truth. This goes somewhat further, for the artist feels his kinship with reality, and is actually capable, when truly inspired, of certain intimations and partial revelations of the ideal world. To these momentary visions he gives powerful expression in

the form of rhythms and symbols, and his influence upon mankind is incalculably great. But intense feeling and enthusiasm are uncertain guides, and whether his individual visions are true or false, the artist, as such, does not know. In the absence of a consistent method and a scientific criterion, he frequently, in practice, selects the inferior and less valuable types of experience for artistic embellishment, and such failures in selection sufficiently indicate that following one's feelings is not the best way to seek knowledge of the ideal realm.¹ For the building up of scientific knowledge, then, sensory and emotional experience are inadequate, and it is necessary to seek a method which will develop to the full the human *Anlage*, and thus remain identical in principle with the object to be investigated. This method is to be found in strict analysis and synthesis, and the scientist uses this method, which is the embodiment of consistency, because, by its means, he is enabled to take up into his mind the systematic unity and consistency which are the most fundamental characteristics of the ideal world, *i.e.*, of the objects whose nature he desires to investigate.

It is not, however, in a merely "formal" sense that Platonic consistency is to be understood. Megarian logic has solved its problem when it has succeeded in establishing bare identities and bare differences. Not so with the Platonic dialectician. He rather investigates how far, and in what specific ways, *A* is identical with, or different from, other elements *B*, *C*, *D*. . . in the ideal world. It is not so much the abstract, as the concrete universal, which is under observation (Parm. 136 B-C, Rep. 402 C). The Platonic scientist does not satisfy the demands of his method by establishing, *e.g.*, the proposition that *A* is *A* (or *B* or *C*), but develops the concept which forms the subject of his discourse by expanding its intellectual context, *i.e.*, by expanding its concrete meaning in accordance with the demands of consistency. An example will explain what is meant. Let our

¹ Phædr. 244 ff., etc. Cf. Lodge, Reality and the Moral Judgment in Plato, *Philos. Review*, XXIX pp. 461-464.

subject of discourse be the concept of the "philosopher." The philosopher is, by definition, a lover of truth. This means (1) that he loves *truth*, that he refuses to rest satisfied with appearances and opinions, but presses on until he reaches the end of the intellectual world and apprehends truth in its own nature (Rep. 490 B f., 532 A-B). It means further (2) that he loves *all* truth, that he refuses to remain satisfied with an amount of knowledge which is accurate enough so far as it goes, but does not cover the entire field. He loves the *whole* (Rep. 475 B, 485). It means further (3) that he *loves* the truth, that there is something in him which responds to its appeal, that he desires to possess it, to possess it eternally, to realize the fruits of it in his life, in his life as a private citizen or, if he finds himself in the right kind of state, also in the lives of those around him who willingly accept him as their leader (Symp. 205 E ff. Rep. 496 B f.). This example illustrates, perhaps sufficiently, how scientific method expands the concrete significance of an idea in accordance with the requirements of consistency. Understood in this concrete sense, consistency is a characteristic of every concept so far as it is an Idea, so far, that is, as it genuinely constitutes an element in the ideal world, and the function of scientific analysis and synthesis consists precisely in unfolding the meaning and relationships in the ideal world which belong to the particular Idea which happens to be the subject under investigation.

From this it follows that moral Ideas also, *e.g.*, the Ideas of Justice, Courage, Temperance, etc., possess this characteristic of being a one in many, of forming parts of a single consistent system, and are capable of intellectual expansion at the hands of the scientific student of ethics (Rep. 402 C, 618 C f.). But it should be noted that it is not in virtue of any specifically ethical quality that they are expansible—mathematical and aesthetical Ideas are equally expansible—but in virtue of their being Ideas and constituting, as such, portions of the ideal system. It is their ethical quality which, no doubt, gives them their moral significance, their impressiveness and importance for the conduct of life.

But it is from their more general, metaphysical or ideal quality that they derive their consistency and expansibility. When, then, it is demonstrated that what is commonly accepted as a moral idea—*e.g.*, money-making, power-seeking, or the pursuit of pleasure as the goal of life and the supreme good—falls apart, in the hands of the scientific analyst, into elements which are disparate, *i.e.*, leads, when consistently expanded, to consequences which contradict one another, the argument proves, not so much that the ideal in question is lacking in ethical quality, as that it is lacking in logical quality. Thus, when it is shown that the ideal of money-making leads to a plutocratic and oligarchic organization of the state, and that a state ruled by such oligarchs eventually destroys itself, so that the ideal of money-making leads, not to success in money-making, but to financial ruin, if not to death, what is directly proved is that this popular ideal contradicts itself and is thus irrational, is not an Idea at all, cannot be regarded as forming part of the ideal system.² It follows from this, of course, that it is not a *moral* Idea either; but the point of the argument is, primarily, to deny that it is an Idea at all, in any final sense. So too of the argument against Thrasymachus. The point made is that systematic *pleonexia*, which *can* take place only under the supposition of a stable social order, is inconsistent with the order which it presupposes, and leads inevitably to the disruption of all social order, in this way destroying its own possibility. As an ideal for social leadership, it is thus self-contradictory, and cannot possibly constitute an element in the ideal system, of which consistency is so prominent an attribute (Rep. 351 B ff.). From this it follows that it is not a *moral* ideal either, but the refutation is directed, primarily, against its claim to be regarded as rational or as one of the ideal patterns which together constitute reality. It is with a clear consciousness of this that the Platonic Socrates sums up the discussion in the statement that, so far as the specific nature

² Rep. 422 ff., etc. Cf. Lodge, *op. cit.*, *Philos. Review* XXIX p. 360. So also justice consists in each element in the state being true to its own Idea, the Ideas in question constituting a perfect system (Rep. 433 ff.).

of the moral Idea under discussion (Justice) is concerned, nothing definite has been discovered (Rep. 354 C). So too in the argument with Callicles, he states that he himself knows nothing as to the specific moral truths involved (*re* Temperance), but that he is convinced that such a position as has been maintained by Callicles is contradictory and irrational (Gorg. 509 A, etc.).

From these and from similar instances (Theæt. 150 B f., Rep. 338 E ff.) it follows that, for Plato, consistency is a standard, by reference to which the ideality, rather than the morality, of situations or proposed actions is judged. It decides their right to be accepted as ideals at all, *i.e.*, as fitted to take their place in the ideal system which constitutes reality, and to be regarded as fully rational. Thus understood, the term is employed in two main senses: (1) logical, *i.e.*, as one of the standards necessarily involved in the dialectical method. Two or more interlocutors, in order to come to grips with one another, in order to discuss at all, necessarily observe the requirements of consistency. In this sense consistency is used to test whether a given subject of discourse—*e.g.*, the Parmenidean “one,” or pleasure or power claiming to be the chief good—can be discussed consistently at all, or whether it leads to contradictions which make discussion itself ludicrous and absurd (Euthyd. 303, Theæt. 161 E, Parm. 135 B–C). The second sense (2) is more metaphysical, less a law of thought as such, and more a law of ultimate entities, a law expressing the interrelationship of elements in the metaphysically real world of Ideas (Parm. 131 C ff., Soph. 251 D ff.). In this sense consistency tests the right of a proposed course of action to be regarded as real rather than as illusory, *i.e.*, tests the objective validity of the subject of discourse (Phædr. 247 C f., Parm. 132 D, Soph. 247). This second sense seems to be the more final for Plato. Interlocutors observe the requirements of consistency, not merely in order to discuss with one another, but especially in order that, by means of such discussion, they may establish contact with the ideal world which constitutes reality. In our search for the Platonic standard

which serves to distinguish good from evil, we thus pass from the study of consistency in the logical sense to its profounder sense, in which it coincides with objectivity.

10. OBJECTIVITY.

From the time of Thales to the time of Plotinus, reference to the objective or the real as a final standard by which to determine the value of actions is characteristic for Greek thought. Everywhere around him, in the eclipses of the heavenly bodies, in the calms and sudden storms of the *Ægean*, in the rapid social and political developments from Magna Græcia to Persia, the Greek saw change, instability, a bewilderingly kaleidoscopic movement of life. On the outskirts of the Hellenic world, *e.g.*, among the Heracliteans of Asia Minor and the Sophists of the North and West, there was a tendency to see in life nothing but a struggle of conflicting wills-to-power, each equally arbitrary and subjective, a kind of atomistic individualism in which might made right and intelligence was a convenient instrument in the hands of the unconstitutional dictator for the Machiavellian deception of his less clever subjects as well as of his competitors for power. In Greece itself, under the influence of a historically successful imperialism at Athens, this doctrine found a measure of acceptance among the aspiring and half-educated scions of noble and wealthy families. But for the typically Hellenic thinker, Change always constitutes a challenge to seek for some underlying Permanent, a Reality of which the changing phenomena are but the Appearances, and the chief solution of the problem along these lines is found in the Dialogues of Plato.

The problem is, starting from the changing phenomena of experience, somehow to penetrate beneath the surface and discover the underlying reality, a reality which shall satisfy the demand of reason for unity, consistency, and meaning. The only way in which this problem can be solved is by the discovery and use of a method which will sift the phenomena so as to extract from them all of their content which can satisfy the ideal of consistency and systematic unity. This is

the dialectical method, and in the hands of Plato it is used, with clear self-consciousness, for precisely this purpose (*Polit.* 285 B f., *Parm.* 136 B-C, *Phileb.* 16 D-E).

All experience, however illusory, however much a matter of "appearance," is at least partly objective, contains some reference to reality, although its reference to the final reality, the system of Ideas, may be indirect and implicit. For example, sensory experience, however fluctuating and misleading, does convey information concerning the physical object which stimulates eye or ear (*Theæt.* 163 B f., *Phileb.* 33 D), and the physical object certainly partakes of the reality which Plato ascribes to all objects which can act upon others.³ Scientific method cannot, however, extract from sensory experience any kernel of reality which, while remaining at this level—*i.e.*, remaining a matter of direct sensory experience—will also satisfy the requirements of the method in the way of system, consistency, unity. There is no possibility of erecting a structure which shall be both sensory and of scientific value. For in the hands of the dialectician sensory experience inevitably develops inconsistencies of all sorts, and the problems thus raised cannot be solved until we rise above the level of sensation (*Rep.* 522 C ff.). Judged, then, by reference to the standard of objectivity, sensory experience, so far as it remains sensory, fails to satisfy the demands of reason.

Unsatisfactory, however, as it is in this form, sensation yet furnishes the basis upon which something a little more helpful can be erected. Freed from the fluctuations of the sensation-process, made more permanent, and, as it were, standardized in the form of memories, such experiences (*Theæt.* 163 E f., *Cratyl.* 437 B), when synthesized with yet further sensations, can give us "opinion"—a kind of experience which expresses, in condensed and concentrated form, the meaning-elements common to many memories

³ *Soph.* 247 D-E. Also the analogy in the "line" (*Rep.* 509 E f.) indicates that physical objects stand to their "images" as reality to appearance.

and sensations.⁴ Opinion, however, is not only less fluctuating than sensation. Containing, as it does, the elements common to many experiences of the same type, it tends to be also more consistent than the single sensory experience, and thus more nearly satisfies the demands of scientific method. And yet, there is a reason which prevents it from ever being fully satisfactory. Analysis and synthesis of our opinions, resulting in something which still remains opinion, leave us with a certain deficiency, a deficiency inherent in the nature of opinion as such. Opinion may be correct and true, objective and sound, and, so far, from a strictly practical standpoint, *e.g.*, as a guide to specific action, is satisfactory enough. If the opinion on the basis of which we act, is itself based upon reality, then our action reflects the true nature of the reality in question. *E.g.*, if we wish to reach a certain place, and if our opinion as to the route to be followed is correct, we shall reach the place (*Meno* 97). But the difficulty is that opinion, as such, is merely opinion, and contains in itself no criterion of its own correctness. It may thus, equally well, be false, out of touch with things-as-they-are. If our opinion as to the route to be followed is false, we shall not reach the place (*Theæt.* 187 D ff., *Symp.* 202 A).

Opinion, then, may be true, or it may be false. If opinions are false, no scientific manipulations can extract from them objectively valid conclusions (*Polit.* 278 D-E). Even if we imagine two false opinions accidentally so opposed to one another as partly to cancel out in such a way as to leave standing a statement which happened to be true, this result itself could be no more than an ungrounded belief, *right* opinion, possibly, but still only *opinion*, without insight into its own truth or falsity, and thus, as such, still unsatisfactory from a theoretical standpoint. If opinions are true,

⁴ *Phædo* 96 B, *Phileb.* 38 B. Opinion may be based upon our own sensory experiences, or upon the experiences of others imparted to us in words (*Tim.* 51 D f., *Theæt.* 201 A-C).

however, or at least largely true, Plato thinks it possible, by comparing them carefully, by a thorough analysis and synthesis to cancel out the false elements and to retain the positive element common to all the true opinions, and this method of sifting does actually result in giving us something satisfactory, for it gives us the Idea itself (*Polit.* 277 E f., 285 B, cf., *Parm.* 131 E). But so long as we remain at the level of opinion, the reality undoubtedly contained within the opinion cannot be extracted in such a way as to fulfil the requirements of the scientist. The reality which is finally extracted has raised us above the level of opinion, to the level of the Idea.

To the level of the Idea.—Yes, but not to the level of the Idea considered in its full nature as ideal. At the present level, which we may perhaps characterize as the higher level of opinion or the lower level of knowledge, the level of the special or departmental sciences (*Rep.* 533 B-D, etc.), the idea is still an empirical generalization. It is raised above the mere groping which precedes science, and has won its way through to a certain degree of clearness, but it is still empirical, still closely bound up with the masses of opinion from which it has been with difficulty extracted. That is to say, it is still grounded in sensory experience, still verified by reference to sensory experiments (*Rep.* 510 D-E). It may be compared with other ideas which fall within its own group, and may thus be slightly further loosed from its moorings in an experience which is still, in the end, sensory; but so long as these other ideas are at its own level, no amount of intellectual manipulation can make this level more than the level of departmental knowledge, a type of knowledge which is still partly "blind," *i.e.*, still devoid of the highest insight (*Phædr.* 250 A-B, *Rep.* 484 C. f., etc.). The standpoint and conclusions of the departmental sciences, resting, as they do, upon assumptions, upon something accepted, taken for granted, still retain to a certain degree the nature of "opinion" (*Rep.* 534 C), and it is only when, by a still wider synthesis of these assumptions themselves, the element which has hitherto been taken for granted is finally grounded, and

grounded in a principle which is itself ideal and completely permeable to reason, that we reach the stage of perfect system, perfect unity, perfect consistency, perfect intelligibility. Reality is now envisaged as a system of all the Ideas unified and made intelligible in their interrelations by the supreme principle of their nature and organization, the Idea of Good, and in this vision demands of consistency and objectivity are fully satisfied (Rep. 511 B ff., 532 ff., Soph. 254 B-C). The problem has been solved.

This ideal vision is difficult for the individual to realize. But when and so far as realized, it is not something tenuous, formal, abstract, less vital than the ordinary human experiences at the level of sensation or opinion. On the contrary, these more elementary experiences are fragmentary, contradictory, overlaid with misleading associations which obscure what forces of insight we do possess (Rep. 527 D-E, Phileb. 58 A). The result of the sifting method of dialectic is to give us the genuine elements of reality which underlie the tissue of associations which constitute "common" sense, and these elements, separated out and apprehended in their interrelations, are concrete, rich, and vital in the highest degree. The experience of the dialectician is not a convenient epistemological arrangement of formal patterns expressive of unity and diversity, but is a rational, clear-cut experiencing of the actual, concrete structure of reality itself (Rep. 518 C f.). The Permanent underlying Change, the Real which underlies Appearance, has been finally discovered, and the source of superficiality, irrelevance, and deception has been finally removed.

When, therefore, it is stated that the value of conduct and character should be estimated by reference to the degree of objectivity which they manifest, what is meant is that conduct organized and directed by insight into the genuine structure of reality is not a house of cards, or the baseless fabric of a dream-illusion, but is firm as reality itself, is itself real and an organic portion of reality itself (Cf. Laws 903 B f.). A character which is formed upon the ideal patterns, takes up into itself, as constituent elements in its own structure,

the principles discovered by scientific method. In fact, the philosopher gradually becomes the embodiment of the ideal system, each pattern which he discovers in the universe having its counterpart in his own mind, so that the macrocosm and the microcosm are, at least in principle, identical, the visible universe and the knowing mind being two expressions of one and the same system of Ideas (Rep. 472 C-D, 500 B ff.). It is because the philosopher has the root of the matter in him, that he is capable of understanding the universe, and the process of philosophic study is thus at one and the same time (1) development of insight into the ideal patterns and their interconnection in the universe, and (2) the development in his own character of structural lines corresponding precisely to the patterns and their interconnections which his insight is discovering. The character and conduct of such a man escape subjectivity and fallacy, are rational and objective in the highest sense (Rep. 490 B, 540, 613 A-B). When, then, it is stated that objectivity is a moral standard, it is meant that actions and characters are of value precisely so far as they express the genuine nature of a rational universe, and of a universe which is not only rational, not only satisfactory to the intellect, but is also existent, *the* universe which *is*, and is rational. This certainly constitutes a standpoint for deciding upon the value of actions, and it is impossible to conceive of one which could be more final. As Plato puts it, we have come to the end of the intellectual realm. For the philosophic judge, *i.e.*, for the finest and most highly trained reason, such a standard is final, absolutely true.

So far we have considered, separately and in detail, the evidence upon which universal assent, written law, pleasure, benefit, social solidarity, etc., are regarded as furnishing us with moral standards, with criteria upon which we can rely in our attempts to distinguish good from evil. We should now be in a position to put together the results of these separate investigations, and, by summing up the evi-

dence in a more general way, to come to a final conclusion as to Plato's general attitude on the moral standard.

As we look over the results of our separate studies, we note that nearly all the proposed moral standards have one thing in common: it is from the standpoint of opinion rather than of knowledge, that they are accepted as standards of value. As opinion deepens into knowledge or philosophic insight, they are seen to be inadequate and partial, pointing beyond themselves to another standard as more final, a standard which alone gives to them what moral significance they possess. In our more general summary of the evidence, we can thus take this as our single point of comparison, and can ask, in each case, what this final standard is, to which, by the verdict of philosophic knowledge, the special standard seems to point.

Let us begin with "universal assent." If we ask what is the exact content common to all opinions on moral subjects, and whence derived, we find that the content itself is highly general and vague, amounting to little more than agreement that there *is* a distinction between good and evil, that the distinction is of great practical importance, and that the good possesses characteristics such as independence upon externals, adequacy, desirability, etc. If we ask upon what this universal assurance is grounded, we find that it rests upon the general experience of the race, especially upon general social experience, and that this is the gradually sifted-out residuum of fluctuating sensations and associations. So far as these matters of universal opinion are correct—and Plato believes that, at least in these general matters, they *are* correct—this means that in the general experience of the race, a certain amount of reality has become sifted out from appearances, and that these general opinions are right and true, as being based upon the reality which is experienced even in the less valuable forms of sensation and association. The final standard, then, by reference to which the value of universal assent as a criterion is decided, is its objectivity, the degree to which the content of univer-

sal assent corresponds to the nature of the real, *i.e.*, the ideal world.

So too legal enactments represent, to a large extent, the workings upon the community of forces such as hunger, disease, war, and trade, which are a part of physical nature—so much so, in fact, that the institutions of law derive a large portion of their objectivity from the objectivity of these great natural forces (Rep. 373 D f., Laws 709, 766 D ff.). The highest kind of law, however, is not an unreflective reaction to the stimulation of the environment, but is a deliberate attempt, on the part of the philosophic legislator, to reshape the constitution so as to reproduce, in its structure, the structure of the system of Ideas, and so far as he is successful,⁵ law has not only the objectivity of nature, but shares also in the very essence of objectivity, the *ratio essendi* itself. The measure of his success, and in consequence the final standard by which the value of law itself is judged, is the objectivity of the result, *i.e.*, the extent to which legal enactments reproduce the structure of the ideal system.

So also with pleasure. Plato's position is that pleasure, which accompanies the functioning of our action-systems, is actually more pleasant, more intense and more durable, according as it is more objective, more real. That is to say, the organization of our action-systems which most nearly reproduce the organization of the ideal patterns which together constitute the metaphysically real world, is accompanied by a pleasure which is more real and genuine, not only in a metaphysical sense, but actually as experienced pleasure, than any pleasures which could accompany action-systems organized upon some plan which is not attuned to the nature of the universe. For these, being out of touch with things-as-they-are, would tend to be narrow and thus in conflict with themselves as well as ill-adjusted to their

⁵ He is never fully successful (Rep. 473 A), for the material in which he embodies the ideal does not fully admit of this. The best he can do is to establish a legal system which will do for the time being. It will need constant revision (Polit. 294 A f., 299 E f., etc.).

environment, and their hedonic tone would thus inevitably be inferior. Quantity of experienced pleasure, then, depending upon and thus representing the structure of the ideal world, can be used as a moral standard, as a test of the objective value of the different ends which men pursue. The final moral standard, however, which gives to "quantity of pleasure" its significance as a test of values, is objectivity, or the degree to which the organization of character corresponds to the organization of the real world of Ideas.

The case of æsthetical quality is, perhaps, not so clear. Essentially a matter of rhythms and balances and the ordered recurrence of accent, in a word, the introduction, into sensuous experience, of an intellectually apprehensible principle of order (symmetry) in such a way as to bring about a relatively intense emotional reaction, æsthetical quality is, of course, an attribute of whatever exhibits these characteristics. Ethical character, for instance, is an organization of sensuous experience in terms of an intellectually apprehensible principle; it is orderly, balanced, and harmonious, and makes a certain appeal to the emotions; it thus possesses æsthetical quality, and this is fully recognized by Plato. On the other hand, just as pleasure may be obtained from many sources, some of which are mutually exclusive (*Phileb.* 12 C f.), so also of æsthetical pleasure; and an actual study of the situations and character-types enhanced by the wizardry of the artist leads Plato to the conclusion that ethically inferior characters and situations, into which the element of contrast and conflict—an element ideally absent from the ethical character—enters, admit of a greater degree of æsthetical quality. There is therefore a difference between pleasure and æsthetical quality. For while different situations *a, b, c, . . . n*, all give pleasure to certain corresponding characters *A, B, C, . . . N*, a maximum of pleasure is produced by ethical situations, so that the pleasure experienced by the ethical character is quantitatively superior to that of the others. But with æsthetical quality, while any situations which are orderly in such a way as to intensify emotion, have this quality, actually the maximal

emotional reaction is produced, not by ethical situations and characters, *i.e.*, not by what is orderly as such, but rather by what is emotionally exciting. Maximal artistic experience is compatible with a comparatively small amount of objective orderliness; and thus consistency (absence of contrast and conflict), as well as objectivity, is of less importance, in dealing with æsthetical quality, than in dealing with pleasure. There is thus no direct correlation between ethical and æsthetical quality. It remains true that the "rightly and nobly ordered mind and character" will always possess æsthetical quality; but it cannot be inferred that, because a given character is beautiful and affects the beholder like a work of art, it is also of high ethical quality. Æsthetical quality is always an accompaniment, but never a condition of ethical quality; and as it accompanies it only as a necessary consequence of the orderliness of the ethical character, which orderliness is dependent upon and representative of the ideal order, it follows that it is really the ideal order, or the objective, which gives to æsthetical quality whatever meaning it possesses as confirmatory evidence of moral quality. The final standard, then, to which the occasional use of æsthetical quality as a standard points, is objectivity, or the extent to which a given character or situation reproduces the orderliness of the ideal world.

The case of expediency or benefit is more plain. To benefit a man is to help him to realize his own Idea, to become more fully a man, more fully the embodiment of Justice and of the other qualities which go to make up the ideal of humanity, *i.e.*, to assist him to take up reality into his own life and thus become more nearly the embodiment of the ideal or ultimately real system. When therefore it is stated that expediency or benefit constitutes a standard by reference to which we can estimate the value of actions and characters, what is meant is that the degree to which an action realizes the ideal, embodies the objective and metaphysically real system of Ideas, is the final standard of value, and that anything which helps to bring this about,

or is "beneficial," derives its value from this final standard of objectivity or realization of the ideal world.

The case of contribution to the life of the social whole is no less clear. While, at the level of opinion, it is possible to support class legislation, to aim at the interest of the stronger or governing class, through thick and thin with complete honesty of purpose, but with a certain weakness of insight, at the higher level of knowledge it is beyond doubt that the ideal for the social group is to be fully representative of the virtues of wisdom, courage, temperance, and justice, so that the individual citizen realizes his own Idea in harmony with the Ideas of the whole social group, and the group as a whole realizes, as completely as possible, the system of ideal patterns laid up in heaven, the City of God. The valuable thing here is undoubtedly the realization of the ideal system, and when it is asked, Does such and such an action contribute towards the life of the social whole? what is meant is, Does it contribute to realize the ideal life, to make empirically real on earth what is ideally real in heaven? The final standard here is thus undoubtedly objectivity, or realization of the ideal patterns which together constitute ultimate reality.

The case of orderliness can similarly be in no doubt. At the level of opinion, the orderliness of a psychic disposition, of obedience to the powers that be, of the starry heaven, etc., can be mistaken for trustworthy moral standards, though in themselves these may be, in spite of their relative orderliness, of but slight moral significance. But at the level of knowledge it becomes clear that it is ideal orderliness, the orderliness which is found in the mutual relations of the ideal elements which together constitute ultimate reality, which gives whatever moral significance and value attaches to human and physical laws. The final standard is thus clearly objectivity, *i.e.*, the extent to which the orderliness of an institution or character corresponds to and embodies the ideal orderliness, the orderliness of the final reality.

So too with adequacy and self-sufficiency. While opinions may go so far astray as to invest the unconstitutional despot with these attributes of the highest good, from the standpoint of knowledge, to say that something is adequate and independent, is to say that it constitutes an organized whole, and that its principle of organization is identical with the principle which underlies the ideal or ultimately real system. It is thus objectivity, or its reproduction of the structure of reality, which makes the ethical character adequate and independent, and it is objectivity which, here also, is the real standard of the value-judgment.

Finally, consistency is understood by Plato, not merely as a logical principle or law of thought, but also as a law of things, a law which expresses the inter-relationship of the world of Ideas, and it is used, as we have seen, to test, not so much the morality, as the ideality of a proposed line of action, *i.e.*, to test its objectivity or correspondence with the ideal system which constitutes ultimate reality. The final standard, then, here also, is objectivity.

We are now in a position to sum up our conclusion briefly. The final standard of value, in every case, has turned out to be objectivity, or the degree to which a proposed course of action, or a character under investigation, is patterned upon the ideal principles which, for Plato, constitute reality. These principles are organized in terms of a single principle, the Idea of Good, *i.e.*, the principle of Value as such, value and reality being identified; and a character or an action has value, precisely to the degree in which it is based upon and tends to realize the principle of Value itself. Understood in the light of this final principle, *i.e.*, as expressions of ultimate Value or of the essence of Reality, universal assent, written law, quantity of pleasure, expediency, consistency, etc., can safely be used as proximate standards, by which to measure the value of actions and characters in particular situations and from particular standpoints. It is in this sense that they are used by the Platonic dialectician. But apart from such transvaluation in the light of this prin-

ciple, they belong to the region of opinion, the region of twilight and moral blindness, and cannot safely be used as moral standards at all. It is insight into Reality, or the ideal realm and its principle, alone, which enables the philosophic judge to make value-judgments which are reliable and valid.

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